

# Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal Project Study



## Frequently Asked Questions



**Q:** What is the purpose of this study?

**A:** The purpose of the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal Project is to help Detroit and Southeast Michigan remain competitive in the freight transportation business. The goal is to develop a regional facility or facilities with enough capacity to handle current and future intermodal freight shipments needed by businesses and industries.



**Q:** What is “intermodal”?

**A:** Intermodal freight is a shipping method used to send products from manufacturers to where people buy them. It is called “intermodal” because it uses two “modes,” trucks and trains, using special containers and trailers. Trucks take the product from the factory to a rail yard and trains move the products across the country. Finally, trucks take the products from a rail yard to their final destination.

This is an efficient method of transportation because shippers move their containers from the trucks to the trains and back again without having to repack the products. This method also can be less expensive. That is why more companies are using it more often.

However, there is a problem in Southeast Michigan. The rail yards in the Detroit area simply do not have enough room. Some companies are sending their shipments through other cities, like Chicago, Cincinnati, and Toledo. As more companies ship through other cities, jobs are lost in Detroit.

**Q:** Who is doing this study?

**A:** The Michigan Department of Transportation and its consultant, The Corradino Group, are working with four major railroads. They are CSX, Norfolk Southern (NS), Canadian National (CN), and Canadian Pacific (CP). The team also is working with local governments, businesses, churches, neighborhood groups, and residents.

**Q: What are you studying?**

**A:** The study is looking at four intermodal terminals and the surrounding areas. The terminals are NS/CSX-Livernois Junction Yard in Southwest Detroit, CP-Expressway in Corktown, CP-Oak in Grandmont and CN-Moterm in Ferndale. Norfolk Southern Railroad, co-owner of the Livernois-Junction Yard already intends to relocate the intermodal activity from three of its other terminals to the Livernois-Junction Yard.

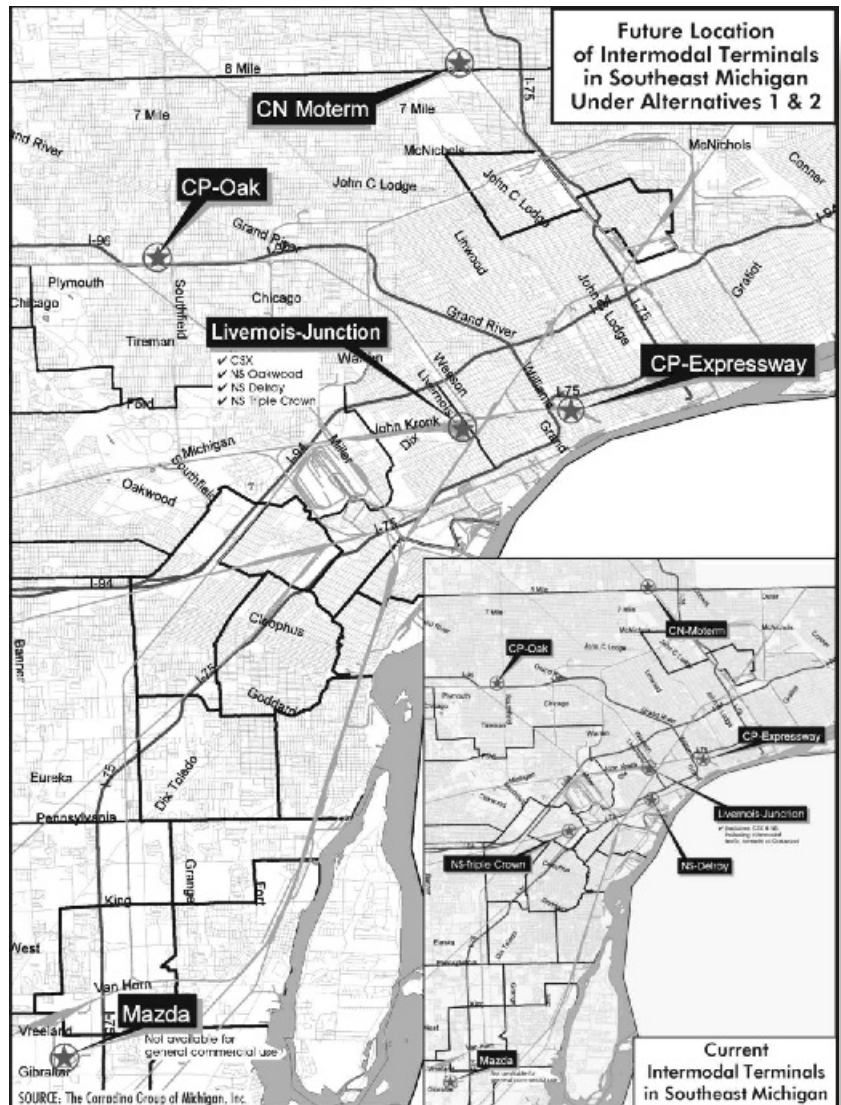
The study will look at the possible benefits and impacts of three alternatives:

1. "No Action." The railroads develop their existing rail yards in Southeast Michigan. The federal and state governments provide no funding or oversight.
2. "Improve/Develop." The railroads develop their existing rail yards in Southeast Michigan. The state and federal governments provide funding and oversight.
3. "Consolidate." The intermodal operations of all four major railroads are consolidated at the Livernois-Junction Yard in Southwest Detroit. The state and federal governments provide funding and oversight.

With each choice comes benefits and impacts to the neighborhoods, the railroads and the job market in Southeast Michigan. The study will look closely at things such as jobs gained and lost. It also will look at noise, air quality and traffic in the neighborhoods. The results of the study will be shared with residents. MDOT will seek public comment before it makes any decisions.

**Q:** How long will the study take?

**A:** The study should be finished by the end of 2004.



**Q:** Why are you looking at only the Livernois-Junction Yard for consolidation?

**A:** The Livernois-Junction Yard is different from the other intermodal terminals. At Livernois-Junction, the tracks are set up in such a way that all four major railroads can get to the site. This is not true at the other yards.

**Q:** How is this going to help me, one of the taxpayers helping to pay for all of this?

**A:** This project will increase the competitiveness of Michigan's businesses and industries in the global marketplace. This translates into more jobs, and more secure jobs, in southeast Michigan. Local residents also will benefit from lower transportation costs for consumer goods.

The four railroads and major shippers see this project as an opportunity for more business in Southeast Michigan. The project could mean new or larger businesses around the intermodal terminal(s). For example, the drivers and trucks that visit the yard(s) will need services. This project also could mean changes that make the neighborhoods better. These include giving trucks other routes besides neighborhood streets. It also could mean repairs for streets, bridges, sidewalks, streetlights, and other things.

**Q:** Does the public have a say in this?

**A:** Yes! MDOT always strives to keep the public informed and ask for as much public input as they can get on studies like this.

Announcements for major public meetings are mailed to thousands of area residents. The announcements are printed in English, Spanish and Arabic. Translators attend the large public meetings so that everyone has an opportunity to learn about this project. To make sure you are on the mailing list, call 313-964-1926. MDOT also works with the local media to announce the meetings.



Input from residents has helped shaped the study at every step.

For example, several local organizations recently requested that MDOT expand the study to look at more than just consolidation versus no action. This type of input is helping to create a more complete review of area residents' concerns and questions, as well as their vision for the neighborhood and job market in the future.

**Q:** How can I get more involved?

**A:** "Local Advisory Council" (LAC) meets often to discuss questions and concerns. The LAC offers ideas, advice and suggestions to MDOT. All LAC meetings are open to the public and notices are sent in advance.

The Local Advisory Council:

- Looks at drafts of reports and papers in the study,
- Helps the study stay on schedule,
- Helps keep the study team and interested groups in touch,
- Helps keep the study team and local, state and federal agencies working together.

**Q:** Is it true that because of this project, people and businesses may need to move?

**A:** It is still too early to tell, but it is possible. In Alternatives 2 ("Improve/Develop") and 3 ("Consolidate"), the state may need to buy some property near the site(s). MDOT has already started talking to residents and business owners so they know what to expect if the state needs to buy their property. There are very strict laws in place to protect landowners, business owners and tenants.

The most important thing to remember is that the government cannot just take your home or business. If your property is needed, MDOT is required to help you find a new place to live and to pay fair market value for your house. MDOT also must look at how the project affects businesses. The study will look at the impact of jobs gained and lost through this project.

**Q:** Is it true there will be 16,000 more trucks per day coming into the neighborhoods?

**A:** No. Early in this study, there was an estimate made about how many trucks would be visiting the intermodal yards by the year 2025. The estimate said 8,000 trucks would use the yards each day. One trip in and one trip out for 8,000 trucks is where the 16,000 number came from. The updated truck estimates are that there would be between 4,000 and 5,000 daily intermodal trips in 2025 depending on the alternative.

Even with Alternative 1 ("No Action"), 2000 to 3000 intermodal trucks are going to be on our roads everyday in the future. One goal of this project is to make sure Detroit's intermodal rail yards can keep up with business demands. In addition, MDOT wants to see if they can get the trucks in and out of the yards more safely and efficiently. This means getting them off neighborhood streets whenever possible.

**Q:** Where can I get more information?

**A:** If you would like more information, call 313-964-1926, or visit the project Web site at [www.michigan.gov/mdotstudies](http://www.michigan.gov/mdotstudies).

